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SUBJECT: JournalistsQ Union Backs Down on Backing Chavez

REF: Asuncion 444

11. Responding to a fierce backlash over its defense of Chavez decision not to renew RCTVQs license, the SPP reversed course on the communiqu issued May 29th (reftel). The majority of SPP members voted 6/1 to issue a new communiqu that rejects Qthe attack on press freedom.

12. The new communiqu issued 6/2 reads as follows: QAfter a long and ample debate of ideas about freedom of expression, the SPP membership considered it necessary to issue a statement which reflects the new institutional position of the JournalistsQ Union. In that sense, the plenary session of the membership of the Union considers the denial of RCTVQs license a threat to freedom of the press and expresses solidarity with the affected Venezuelan colleagues.

FITZPATRICK